



Environmental Defense Fund Memo of Opposition to Latest Proposed Changes to the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act

April 30, 2026

As lawmakers continue to consider changes to New York’s climate law, we urge the legislature to preserve the law’s core tenets and advance an alternative proposal that cleans our air, reduces statewide greenhouse gas emissions on a science-based trajectory to 2050, and centers public health, energy affordability, and disadvantaged communities.

The Environmental Defense Fund opposes the [reported changes](#) to the CLCPA currently under consideration, as reported on April 28. These changes threaten the core integrity of New York’s landmark climate law at a moment when state leadership to cut climate pollution and scale clean, affordable energy could not be more important.

The Governor has requested additional time and flexibility on the pace of emissions reductions to 2030. Though the details remain important and it is impossible to evaluate their full extent without bill language, *reported changes go well beyond more time and flexibility – these changes amount to sweeping rollbacks, impacting the fundamentals of the Climate Law’s aims to reduce pollution and protect communities.* Changes proposed will have implications for decades to come—far beyond when current policymakers will be in office.

Of particular concern are details reported on interim emissions targets, which could **weaken the enforceability of any emissions reduction requirement until 2050.**

Specifically, the proposal appears to:

1. Eliminate requirements that the state limit emissions in line with the 2030 mandatory emissions target, which was essential for driving near-term progress
2. Add a flexible 2040 target of 60% emissions reductions below 1990 levels. A 2040 target is an important addition, but it must be mandatory to compel near- to medium-term reductions to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change.

Environmental Defense Fund urges the Legislature to advance a counterproposal that ensures New York can continue to lead on clean, affordable energy, protect communities

from health-harming air pollution, and reduce greenhouse gas pollution at the pace and scale necessary to confront the climate crisis. Such a proposal must include:

1. **A mandatory interim emissions target in 2040** to compel near- and mid-term action, rather than weakening enforceability of targets until 2050.
2. **Implementing regulations adopted by 2027** that require emissions reductions to begin right away on a declining trajectory consistent with science-based recommendations to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.
3. **\$3 billion annually for the Sustainable Future Fund** until cap-and-invest regulations are implemented and generating at least \$3 billion in annual revenue.
4. **Meaningful protections for and investments in disadvantaged communities**, including increased required investment in DACs from implementing regulations.

New Yorkers have already missed out on two full years of benefits from cap-and-invest regulations – amounting to well over \$3 billion in investments in energy efficiency, infrastructure upgrades, pollution reduction, and utility bill rebates.

A well-designed program would [save 85% of New York households more than \\$1,000](#) on average over its first decade, while raising sustained revenue for clean energy progress and investments in cost-saving, pollution-cutting programs in disadvantaged communities. The Legislature should insist that this program is implemented swiftly. States from Virginia to California and Washington have already shown how these revenues can be put to work immediately to lower costs and deliver benefits relative to the status quo.

And New Yorkers continue to want their elected leaders to step up. Recent [polling](#) in a geographically diverse set of competitive districts shows that 55% of all respondents *and* 74% of Democrats surveyed would be more likely to vote for a state legislator who voted to continue implementing New York's clean energy laws. At the same time 55% of respondents and 74% of democrats surveyed support cap-and-invest.

New Yorkers deserve the cleaner air, lower energy bills, better health outcomes, and community benefits that the climate law promised them in 2019. The state has an opportunity to deliver on all fronts, but only if lawmakers preserve the integrity of New York's landmark climate law and advance an alternative proposal that meets the scale of the moment.